

**Marine Biology**

Code: 100830  
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2500251 Environmental Biology	OB	3	1

**Contact**

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**Use of Languages**

Principal working language: spanish (spa)  
Some groups entirely in English: No  
Some groups entirely in Catalan: No  
Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

**Other comments on languages**

The subject is taught in Catalan and Spanish

**Teachers**

Francesc Xavier Munill Bernardich  
Anna Soler Membrives

**Prerequisites**

There are no specific prerequisites, although it would be desirable for the students to have already studied and passed subjects in Zoology, Ecology, Protection of the Natural Environment, Extension of Zoology and Botany.

**Objectives and Contextualisation**

The objective of this course is to provide a basic training in the knowledge of the marine environment from the point of view of basic concepts and physical laws that are used in the study of the oceans, as well as living beings and their interrelationships. Introduce the student in the knowledge of the structure of the marine ecosystem and its biodiversity, and in the study of the most remarkable cases of the interaction of the activity of the man on the marine environment. So that they are able to intuit its consequences.

The specific formative objectives of this subject are:

- Give the student some fundamentals of the main physical and chemical processes that take place in marine aquatic ecosystems.
- Introduce the student to the physical bases or principles that are used to describe the dynamics of aquatic systems.
- Provide basic training in the knowledge of the marine environment from the point of view of living beings and their interrelationships.

- To initiate the student in the structure of the marine ecosystem and in its biodiversity.
- Introduce the student in the processing of energy in the marine environment, both at the individual and ecosystem level.
- To offer to the student the most remarkable cases of the interaction of the activity of the man on the marine environment and that are able to intuit its consequences.
- Develop critical and innovative sense, as well as interest in continuing professional development.

## Competences

- Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.
- Diagnose and solve environmental problems regarding the biological environment.
- Identify and interpret the diversity of species in the environment.
- Manage information
- Participate in environmental impact assessments regarding the biological medium.
- Sample, characterise and manipulate populations and communities.
- Take account of social, economic and environmental impacts when operating within one's own area of knowledge.
- Take sex- or gender-based inequalities into consideration when operating within one's own area of knowledge.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.
2. Actuar en l'àmbit de coneixement propi avaluant les desigualtats per raó de sexe/gènere.
3. Identify impacts on the flora, fauna, soils, vegetation and the functioning of the ecosystems.
4. Manage information
5. Perform inventories of organisms, sample populations and identify communities.
6. Propose measures to correct impacts on the flora, fauna, soils, vegetation and the functioning of the ecosystems.
7. Recognise in the field the principal plants, animals and organisms that are characteristic to the communities in our environment.
8. Take account of social, economic and environmental impacts when operating within one's own area of knowledge.

## Content

### INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction. What is Marine Biology? Historical perspective of marine biology. An oceanic world. Differences for life between the terrestrial and marine environment. Classification of marine organisms and environments.

### II. THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

2.- Sea water: chemical factors. Composition of sea water. Chemical elements present major and minor. Nutrients. Dissolved gases (O<sub>2</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>). Particle and dissolved organic matter (MOP and MOD). Sediments. Type of sediment. Sedimentation on the continental shelf and in deep marine basins.

3.- Physical factors of the sea water. Salinity, temperature (thermocline), density, viscosity, light. Vertical structure of the ocean: masses of water, diagrams T / S. Orography. Structure of the margins of the ocean

basins and the bottoms of the oceans (zoning and profiles).

4.- The dynamics of the water masses. The atmosphere and the ocean. The force of Coriolis. Geostrophic currents. Wind currents: Ekman's spiral, convergences and divergences. Thermohaline circulation. Global circulation: surface currents, deep currents, circulation in the Mediterranean. Marine waves: capillary, gravitational, wave interference, internal waves, seismic waves. The tides. Coastal upwelling.

### III. MARINE ECOSYSTEM STRUCTURE: Marine communities

5.- Primary production to the sea. Primary production. Methods to measure primary production. Methods to measure phytoplankton biomass. Factors that control and condition primary production. Factors that control the percentage of nutrient salts in the Mediterranean. Variations in global productivity: latitudinal, seasonal, regional and bathymetric.

6.- Marine communities: pelagic domain I. Plankton. Generalities. Classification of plankton. Phytoplankton: composition and distribution. Methodology of sampling and study of plankton.

7.- Pelagic domain II. Zooplankton: generalities. Composition of zooplankton. Adaptations of plankton to pelagic life. Distribution of zooplankton: Vertical migrations. The plankton indicator.

8.- Pelagic domain III. Necton: Generalities. Composition. Adaptations to pelagic life. Distribution of the necton: horizontal migrations. Methodology of sampling and study. Current status of exploited stocks.

9.- Marine communities: benthic domain I. Generalities, benthic habitats, type of benthos. Comparison between benthos and plankton. Composition and distribution (rocky and sandy substrate, coastal and deep). The community of *Posidonia oceanica*. Adaptations of benthic animals. The organization of space: succession. Sampling methodology.

10.- Benthic domain II. Estuaries and coral reefs. Origin and type of estuaries. Physico-chemical characteristics of estuaries. Estuaries as ecosystems. Human impact on estuaries. Coral reefs: Bioconstructive organisms (corals and others). Types of coral reefs (coastal, barrier, atolls). Ecology of coral reefs. Threats to coral reefs.

### IV. ENERGY PROCESSING

#### *At the individual level*

11.- Feeding. Introduction. Feeding behavior to the sea. Feeding in plankton. Feeding in coastal and deep benthos. Methodology of food study.

12.- Reproduction. Introduction: reproduction at sea (biomass renewal). Adaptations to ensure reproduction. Reproduction in plankton. Reproduction in benthos. Type of development at sea. Methodology of reproduction study.

#### *At the ecosystem level*

13.- The biotic interrelations. Introduction. Competition and coexistence. Predation in benthos and plankton, strategies to protect against predation. The symbiosis in the sea: parasitism, mutualism and commensalism.

14.- The transfer of energy. Trophic networks. Introduction. Trophic chains and energy transfer. Estimation of secondary production. Trophic networks. The microbial loop. Comparison between marine and terrestrial production.

### V. ENVIRONMENT-MAN (INTERACTION OF MAN'S ACTIVITY ON THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT)

15.- The impact of man. Type of uses of the sea. Industrial and agricultural installations and activities. Exploitation of its abiotic and biotic resources. Protection and conservation. Protection tools. Threats and threatened species. Conservation and management of the coastal strip.

#### PRACTICAL CLASSES:

Practice 1. To two different beaches, collection of biological samples and measurement of abiotic parameters of the coastal zone. Labeling and conservation.

Practice 2. (performed in 3 sessions of 2-4 h) Sample processing. Separation of samples, analysis, identification, data collection. Treatment of results. Elaboration of a written work.

Practice 3. Discussion of results of practical classes.

Practice 4. Correction of the practice article.

### **Methodology**

The methodology used in this course to achieve the learning process is based on student work with available information. The function of the professor is to give the information or indicate where student can get it, helping and supervising the student during the learning process. To achieve this goal, the course is based on the following activities:

#### Lectures

The content of the theory program will be taught mainly by the teacher in the form of master classes with complementary interactive activities in which the student has a active role. The theory classes will be complemented with the visualization of animations and videos related to the topics covered in class. Likewise, some classes will be complemented with activities for evaluating student learning, by solving issues raised by the teacher that will be solved at the beginning of the session (when they serve as a review of contents already discussed in previous sessions) or at the end of the session (when questions help the reflection on the matter explained or the video analysed). The resolution of these issues will be evaluated individually or in groups. The visual aids used in class by the teacher will be available in the Virtual Campus. It is recommended that students take this material to class, to use it as support when taking notes. Students are advised to consult regularly the books recommended in the Bibliography section to consolidate and clarify, if necessary, the contents explained in class.

In these sessions the student acquires the basic scientific-technical knowledge of the course that must be complemented with personal study of the topics explained.

#### Seminars

They will consist of directed work classes, where current topics previously programmed by the teacher will be discussed in groups. The participation of students will be valued.

The aim of the seminars is to promote the capacity for analysis and synthesis and critical reasoning.

#### Field and laboratory practices

Field practice consists of two trips (8 and 4 hours respectively) to two beaches on the Catalan coast.

The laboratory practices consist of:

- 3 sessions of 2-4 hours for sample processing and obtaining results.

- 2 sessions of 2h aimed at the orientation of the treatment of results and discussion of results.
- 1 session of 2h aimed at the correction of the scientific article.

The students, based on the data collected in the field and the results obtained in the laboratory, will make a scientific mini-article with a maximum length of 15 pages (all included), with an Arial letter body of 12 with a line spacing of 1, 5, which will consist of the following mandatory sections:

- Title, authors, subject, course.
- Summary.
- Introduction to the topic of work with the objectives of the same at the end.
- Material and methods.
- Results
- Discussion.
- Bibliography (regulations in the Virtual Campus).

Once delivered and corrected the article by the teacher, a correction session will be made.

#### Tutorials

The aim of these sessions is to solve doubts, review basic concepts not explained in class and guide about the sources consulted by students. The schedule of the tutorials is specified with the teaching staff, and if the teacher considers it convenient, some can be done as a group in the classroom.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

### Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Classroom lectures	1	0.04	8, 4, 3, 6
Field practices	12	0.48	1, 4, 5, 7
Lab practices	14	0.56	4, 5
Seminar	4	0.16	8, 4, 3, 6
Theory lessons	20	0.8	8, 3, 6, 5
Type: Supervised			
Tutorial meeting	6	0.24	3, 6
Type: Autonomous			
Autonomous study and self-study work	54	2.16	4, 3, 6
Preparation of work, resolution of issues and problems	37	1.48	2, 4, 3, 6

## Assessment

The evaluation of this subject is carried out throughout the course:

Evaluation of the attitude and participation of the student to master classes and seminars:

The attitude and participation (group and individual) in the different types of activities that will be developed throughout the theoretical classes and the seminar will be evaluated.

This evaluation has a global weight of 10% of the final grade and is not recoverable.

Evaluation of the exams:

*Midterm exams:*

With the midterm ones, the knowledge acquired by the student in the subject will be evaluated individually, as well as his capacity of analysis and synthesis, and of critical reasoning.

There will be 2 midterm exams of the subject:

The 1st midterm has a global weight of 32.5% of the final grade.

The 2nd midterm has a global weight of 17.5% of the final grade.

*Recovery exam:*

Students who do not pass any of the 2 midterm exams (minimum grade: 5 out of 10) must recover them in the final exam of recovery. The maximum note of the recovery will be a 6.

Students who wish to improve a grade of one or both of the midterms may do so by taking the final (recovery) exam, but the previously obtained grade will be lost.

To make the average with the other evaluative activities it is necessary to arrive at a 4.

Evaluation of the practices:

Of the assistance and use to the practices of field and laboratory (10%) and of the elaboration of a scientific article (30 %) will result 40% of the final grade.

Written work will be evaluated:

- Introduction: conceptual clarity of the approach.
- Correction of the methodology
- Clear and concise presentation of the results.
- Ability to discuss and interpret the results.
- Formal quality of the document (tables, figures, references).
- Adaptation to the established length.

To make the average with the other evaluative activities it is necessary to arrive at 4.

This test (Practices) is not recoverable.

Not evaluable:

To be eligible for the retake process, the student should have been previously evaluated in a set of activities equaling at least two thirds of the final score of the course or module. Thus, the student will be graded as "No

Avaluable" if the weight of all conducted evaluation activities is less than 67% of the final score. Attendance to practical sessions (or field trips) is mandatory. Students missing more than 20% of programmed sessions will be graded as "No Avaluable"

## Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Active participation in classes and seminar. Evaluation of deliveries of the related exercises.	10%	0	0	2, 8, 3, 6
Assistance and use of field and laboratory practices	10%	0	0	1, 7
Correction and delivery of the practice article	30%	0	0	4, 5, 7
First partial theory	17,5%	1	0.04	4, 3, 6
Second partial theory	32,5%	1	0.04	4, 3, 6

## Bibliography

Alcaraz, M., Estrada, M., Flos, J., Font, J., Romero, J. y Salat, J. 1985. L'oceanografia. I. Introducció a l'ecologia marina mediterrània. Diputació de Barcelona, Barcelona.

Cognetti, G., Sarà, M. y Magazzù, G. 2001. Biología Marina. Ariel Ciencia, Barcelona.

Demestre, M., Lleonart, J., Martin, P., Peitx, J.A. y Sardà, F. 1986. L'Oceanografia. II. Recursos pesquers de la mar catalana. Diputació de Barcelona, Barcelona.

Kaiser M. J. et al. 2020. Marine Ecology. Processes, Systems and impacts. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Lalli, C.M. y Parsons, T.R. 2006. Biological oceanography. An introduction. Pergamon Press, Oxford.

Levinton, J.S. 2017. Marine Biology, function, biodiversity, ecology. Oxford University Press, New York.

Pinet, P.R. 2021. Invitation to Oceanography. Jones and Bartlett Publishers, Sudbury.

### WEB pages

<http://www.icm.csic.es> WEB del Instituto de Ciencias del Mar de Barcelona (CSIC), con información sobre investigación en temas marinos, divulgación y noticias que se actualizan periódicamente.

<http://www.jbpub.com/oceanlink> Material que complementa la información del libro de texto Pinet (2000).

<http://www.enn.com> Noticias de investigaciones medioambientales.

[http://seawifs.gsfc.nasa.gov/OCEAN\\_PLANET/HTML/peril\\_habitat.html](http://seawifs.gsfc.nasa.gov/OCEAN_PLANET/HTML/peril_habitat.html) Informaciones sobre impactos actuales del hombre en el mar.

<http://www.noaa.gov> Publicación de la NOAA (National Oceanographic & Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, U.S.) sobre los océanos, pesquerías, clima, costas, etc.

<http://www.mispecies.com/boletin> Información (noticias, agenda, legislación y novedades) sobre Pesquerías y Acuicultura en España y Europa.

[www.ceab.csic.es](http://www.ceab.csic.es)

[www.ieo.es](http://www.ieo.es)

[www.coml.org](http://www.coml.org) Census of Marine Life. De todo. Muchos links

[www.scarmarbin.be](http://www.scarmarbin.be): SCAR Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research

[www.obs-banyuls.fr](http://www.obs-banyuls.fr) Banyuls Sur Mer Fr.

## **Software**

RStudio

Deducer

*Ocean Data View (ODV)*

QGIS